THE DICKENSIAN

A Magazine for Dickens Lovers
and Monthly Record of the Dickens Fellowship

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WHEN FOUND——

THE sale of the late Sir Henry Irving's library and other effects last month at Christie's created great interest and excitement. The item which had the greatest Dickensian interest was the grangerized copy of Forster's *Life of Dickens*, extended to eight volumes by the addition of extra plates, portraits, autograph letters, MSS., etc., with the pages of text artistically decorated. It is a unique copy, and much competition for possession was created in consequence. It finally became the prize of Captain Knowles for £380. *The Raven*, over which there has been some controversy, realized £4. 4s.

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The copy of Forster's *Life of Dickens* has an interesting story attached to it. Some years ago it was in the catalogue of Mr. Harvey, the bookseller, and was much talked about in public and in the Press. Among the many persons who went to view it were the late Sir Henry Irving and his great friend Mr. John L. Toole. Irving desired very much to possess it, but could not see his way to pay the £250 then asked for it, and reluctantly left it, as he thought, for some more wealthy admirer. Outside the building Irving left his friend Toole in order to keep an engagement. On reaching his rooms later, however, he was greatly surprised to find the volumes he had so coveted awaiting him on his table, with one of Toole's kindly notes asking him to accept the volumes as a friendly gift.

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The Dickens Museum at Portsmouth still attracts admirers of the novelist from all parts of the world. Since its opening there has been no lull in the stream of visitors, and up to the 19th of December nearly 31,400 had been registered by Mr. Clemenson, the curator there. He informed the writer, now that the house has got to be world-known as a museum, it gets flooded, so to speak, with Americans during the season. But the house is visited by the townsfolk daily. Every one evinces an interest in the pictures and other exhibits, and often explain to each other some of the former. "Don't you know who Bill Sikes was?" said one, when looking at the burglar's portrait. "Why, he's the man who murdered little Nell." On another occasion Squeers was pointed out as the schoolmaster who so cruelly treated "poor little David Copperfield." Mr. Clemenson has many such stories to tell, and he is frequently asked "which is the room Dickens wrote his books in."

* * *

I continue to receive letters and articles on the Drood question, most of which traverse the ground already gone over so much. One of the former, from Mr. Edward J. Sharpe, an old student of Dickens, who has recently contributed to the subject in *The Star* newspaper, is

an interesting communication, and in it the writer shows himself firmly convinced that Drood was not killed. "A friend of mine," he says, "who was on intimate terms with Dickens, told me before the author's death that Dickens made no secret of the fate of Edwin Drood. He was not to die, but to confront his wicked uncle in the cathedral crypt, just as was indicated in the scene at the bottom of the monthly cover." I also heard this view recently expressed by one who is more likely to know than any one else, and who emphasized the view by saying that the story is called "The Mystery," not "The Murder," of Edwin Drood.

* * *

The Portsmouth Branch has decided to celebrate Dickens's birthday in the same way as in two previous years, viz. a tea and entertainment to six hundred Tiny Tims. This will take place on Tuesday, 6 February, and on Wednesday, 7 February, there will be a grand fancy dress ball in the Town Hall, Portsmouth. The characters will be from Dickens's works, and the proceeds will form the nucleus of a fund to found a Charles Dickens Cot in the Royal Portsmouth Hospital, which is situated within five hundred yards of the novelist's birthplace. The Portsmouth Branch has received a cheque for £5 from Mr. G. T. Cunningham, a former town councillor and guardian of Portsmouth, who is a member of the branch, and who has been blind for forty years. This is to be expended in Moon and Braille type books for the Blind Library.

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Last year Miss Muriel Snow, of Woldingham, Surrey, hit upon a happy idea for raising subscriptions for our charitable fund by organizing a party of carol singers amongst her young friends. So successful were they all that the experiment has been repeated this season, with the result that £4. 1cs. has been sent to the Treasurer of the Fellowship. The ages of the singers vary from eleven to fifteen years. The thanks of the Fellowship are given to Miss Snow and her young friends for their very kind and charitable assistance.

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The Mark Tapley Club of Middlesborough issues a MS. magazine periodically. I have just had the privilege of perusing the last number, and have found it most entertaining. In November last the Club invited Mr. Frank Speaight to give his recital of *Pickwick* in the town, and, thanks to its enthusiasm, the town charities have been enriched to the extent of £12. 5s.

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The Rev. W. Hume Elliot, whose book on *The Country and Church of the Cheeryble Brothers* has been out of print for some years, is about to publish another work dealing with the career of William and Daniel Grant. The book will be entitled *The Cheeryble Brothers: being the Life Story of William and Daniel Grant, the Originals of Dickens's famous Characters*, and will contain much hitherto unpublished matter and several illustrations, and will be dedicated to the Dickens Fellowship.

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The designs for the covers of *The Dickensian* during the present year will be reproduced from those of the People's Edition of Dickens's works, which were issued in green paper boards, 1865–7. The illustrations on the covers were engraved on wood from drawings especially done for the purpose by Phiz. That on our present number appeared on *Sketches by Boz*.

THE EDITOR.

CHARLES DICKENS

HIS CONTRIBUTION TO ENGLISH LITERATURE

By the REV. R. W. G. HUNTER
(MEMBER OF THE MANCHESTER BRANCH OF THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP)

IN attempting to form the estimate suggested by the title of this article, it will be necessary to take just a brief literary retrospect, and place ourselves, for the moment, where our forefathers were in the days of the predecessors of Dickens in the field of imaginative work. There have been at least three—possibly four—great epochs in the history of English fiction. There was the era of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne, and after that came the day of the Great Magician of the North, Sir Walter Scott, who may be said to have filled the stage of his own time, with Fanny Burney and Jane Austen coming in between the two periods. After Scott comes the brilliant age of Dickens and Thackeray, with others of eminence, whose names I need not mention, for they did not attain to the rank of these two mighties.

And now we have the myriad-headed modern school with one powerful genius, George Meredith, standing above them all. It is difficult to sharply define and distinguish writers and periods. I can only claim that this grouping, or rough classification, is an attempt at literary perspective, that we may the better estimate the relative positions and merits of these great writers.

Take the first period—that of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne. It need scarcely be said that they were men of undoubted genius, and that they were the founders of the modern novel. This is the age of reprints, and there is evidently a revival of interest in these giants of a former generation. They were the frank delineators of the social life of their century—its tastes, manners, and morals. It is, however, not enough to say that the picture they drew was a true picture. We cannot leave out of account the mode and motive of its presentation. And if we are right in considering that one of the chief claims of Dickens to the proud title he holds to-day was his reserve on certain subjects, then the nudities of his forerunners in the province of humour only prove the need there was of him.

Jane Austen—a great favourite of mine—is a writer of a very different kind, limited in range, yet, within those limits, of the finest quality.

Scott, the greatest of all, before or since, showed the possibilities of history as furnishing material for imaginative work, and is the unrivalled exponent of the supreme art of romance.

Dickens and Thackeray, whilst in respect of their humour—especially Dickens—they have that touch of nature which makes them akin to Scott, commence a new era. Dickens provided an imaginative representation of the humour of human nature, which, of its kind, has never been equalled. Hence *Pickwick* and its successors clearly justify their own existence.

The question now arises, Has Dickens been superseded by the writers who have followed him? It is a difficult question to answer, and some would say "yes." It can only be answered by reference to first principles in the great Art. What should be the character of a work of fiction? At the risk of a seeming to beg the question in thus venturing to lay down the lines on which a novel should be built, something

of a definition must be attempted. All worthy fiction is such an imaginative representation of life as will please, which, whilst it need not be didactic, must be ethically sound. The incidents will be presented, the characters firmly controlled, the reticences constantly observed, as in correct society, and the spirit and motive of the writer clearly on the side of truth and purity. Now as much of the creative work of the times is not really recreative or healthfully amusing, as so much of it is in distinct violation of the canons of good taste and sound morals, and as Charles Dickens so entirely fulfils in his books the conditions laid down, it may be submitted that on this ground alone there is need of him to-day.

A reference is only due to those other writers whose splendid work illumines the latter half of the nineteenth century, amongst whom may be named the authors of *Lorna Doone* and *John Inglesant*, but such work, though valuable and enduring, is so distinct from that of Charles Dickens that it cannot, in any sense, be said to replace his.

A regard for the proprieties of fiction is not sufficient in itself to keep alive an interest in the works of any given writer, or there would be many candidates for fame. It must, of course, be allied to exceptional genius. It is the union of the two in Dickens that makes his claim on immortality so strong. A glance at his literary quality will show that he has given us something which the world cannot do without.

The most striking thing after all about Dickens was his originality, vivified by an intense human sympathy. Whatever his contribution was, it was original.

Is it too much to say that this was seen in his finding so much new material, and therefore in his wondrous powers of observation and insight? There was science in his methods. Like the botanist and geologist, he was a diligent collector, only his studies were psychological, and his specimens were taken from mankind and its foibles and follies. He was constantly at work on the phenomena of humanity, and, unlike the modern Continental school so terrible in its methods, never was the material presented to view gathered up by a kindlier hand. His writings furnish ample illustration of this. Dickens was a collector in the psychological domain, and an interpreter of humour in the public consciousness. Of course no one—not even his greatest admirer—would pretend to say that the idiosyncrasies of humanity had not struck others before him in the same way. There were brave men before Agamemnon, and there was humour in the world before *Pickwick* appeared. The occasions which provoke the sense of it are amongst the commonest things of life. The odd conjunction of persons and things, which is the philosophy of humour, is constantly occurring in the home and social circle, and we are all—even the dullest—amused by it. But no one before Dickens quite saw it, or so much of it as he did. No one ever made such a wide and sympathetic study of it. With faithful eye and hand he caught the passing humour, and has given it immortality. He has provided us with a literary phonograph, so that we can turn it on and laugh, as we have laughed many a time before, and as we hope to laugh many a time again.

But Dickens was far more than a mere collector of specimens and an interpreter of the sense of humour which more or less exists in all

of us. The materials which he presents to view are not mere photographs—they are works of art. They have passed under his shaping hand—they have taken the mould of his own creative brain. And this is true, not only of the characters, but of the stage on which those actors move—the scenery of his stories. His powerful descriptions of London and Paris, of the railway, the Thames flats, and the sea abundantly illustrate this. Dickens was a genius of the first order. Every figure on his stage lives and moves, and every scene limned by his magic pen is as deep with life as is the great city which he loved so well, and almost over all is an enchantment that holds us by its spell —a sense of the mystery of life. It is in this power of suggestion—this low musical poetic appeal to the subconscious region in our own minds —the strange depths which lie hidden within us all, that the great charm of Dickens lies. It is here that I feel his power equally with his humour, and in this I consider he stands alone amongst the great novelists.

Two chief faults are urged by his critics against the art of Dickens, and they should be noticed in any estimate of the value of his work. There is the familiar one of caricature and exaggeration. In mitigation of this offence, it may be said that his characters were presented under one special phase, but that their creator would not intend us to suppose that these people of his imagination never varied, that Mrs. Nickleby—to lend ourselves to the illusion—was never sensible, or that Mr. Micawber was always effervescent. It was not Dickens's object to present a complete view of his dramatis personæ, as it was with Thackeray. People generally act in the same way in the same circumstances, and Dickens's work rests upon the assumption that they do. He had an ethical purpose in keeping one side of character constantly in sight. Besides, the method lent itself to humour. It may, however, be pointed out that a change for the better does take place in some of the characters whom he had pilloried so persistently; that when they had sufficiently entertained and instructed the audience —at their own expense—their creator, out of a kind of literary gratitude, allows them room for repentance and improvement.

Another familiar accusation against Dickens is that his pathos is maudlin. But are not the situations so described in themselves pathetic? I need only refer to such typical passages as the account of the death of Mrs. Dombey, the decline and death of Paul Dombey, the death of Dora, the fading away of little Nell, and, of a different kind, the long-anticipated moment when the love of David and Agnes for each other finds expression, to convince any one in whom the springs of human sympathy are not dried up that the pathos of Charles Dickens is of the essential kind. These are the occasions when we come on the deep current of human feeling—they are the moments of existence—and two of them are heightened by elements of tragedy. It seems sufficient to say that these passages do really move. If they do not, then Dickens stands condemned; his pathos is really artificial; it is overstrained But who can read the description of the death of little Dombey without emotion? The pathos which does not move—however correct it may be according to the canons of a fastidiously critical judgment—is not pathos, but that which stirs deeply feelings which are common to us all is of the genuine kind.

Extremes meet in Dickens, except in *Pickwick*, which is almost all comedy, but could not be repeated. The reason is not far to seek. He was a true artist, and he knew that the effect of humour is heightened by contrast. He knew that people require a change in the mood of a story. So he set the amusing episodes in a frame, and a very sombre frame it sometimes is. He deals largely with crime, and crime of a squalid character. Given that he may bring such characters on the stage, the rest follows. Mean characters manufacture squalid crime. And, after all, these things, however repulsive, are true of a certain stratum of life, as the newspapers only too abundantly show. This much can be said for its appearance on the stage of Dickens, that, though the reading is at times unpleasant, it is unhurtful —and mirth is never far away. But the art of Dickens generally rises higher than that of melodrama. Take the case of Mr. Dombey, who, like Lady Ashton in Scott's fateful and gloomy romance, buries his house in ruins, under the curse of the demon pride. As in the great Scottish tragedy, the inevitable doom is relieved by the brightest humour. Here, as elsewhere, the art of Dickens can be placed side by side with the art of Scott, and by the side of one who was greater than either—Shakespeare. And, as it is only by comparison with the greatest models that we can form a correct judgment of any writer, we are able thus to place Dickens amongst his contemporaries, and to appreciate the value of his contribution to the literature of the ages. There is much enduring worth in the creations of the great master. They will stand the tests which we must apply to all works of human genius. He has left for the entertainment and elevation of the English-speaking peoples a large body of imaginative and vital production, founded on the truth of human nature, distinctly and peculiarly a kind of its own, yet on the level of the greatest models in the literature of humour.

SOME DICKENSIAN PHRASES

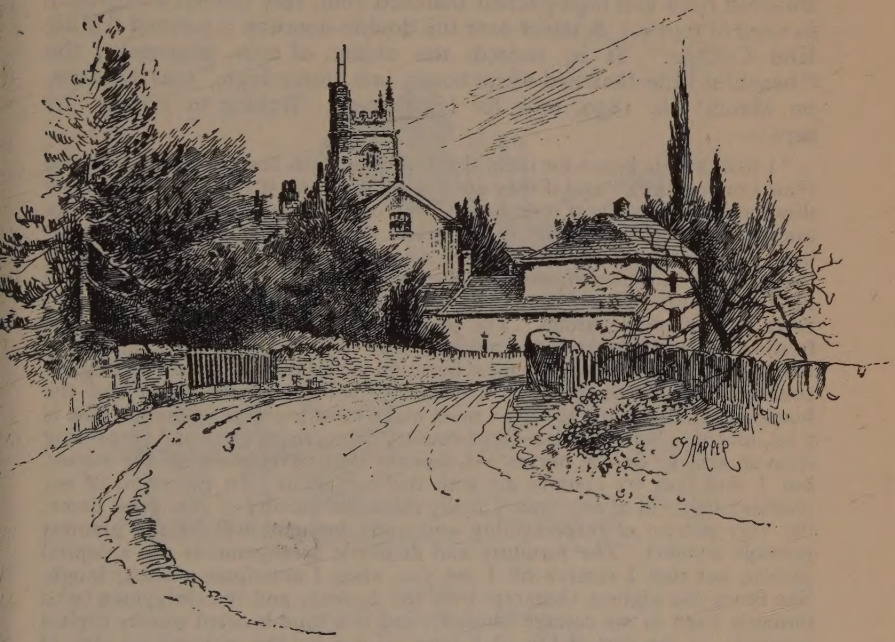
SINCE Shakespeare, no writer has "made language" to the extent that Dickens has done, and the number of common colloquialisms taken from his novels, and which everybody uses every day, is the outstanding proof of the success with which he has appealed to the imagination of the nation. How often one hears "Barkis is willin'," "Beware of widders," "Oliver Twist asks for more," "Codlin's the friend, not Short," "I don't believe there's no sich person," "Let me put my lips to it when I am so dispoged," "Waiting for something to turn up," "A trifle wearing," "The law is a ass," "In a Pickwickian sense," "The demnition bow-wows," "A swellin' wisibly afore my wery eyes," "It's of no consequence," "Demned, damp, moist, unpleasant body," "Is the old min frindly?" "Discipline must be maintained," "Brought up by hand," "When found, make a note on," and so on! Not a few actual words have come from Dickens to the dictionary—"Podsnappery," "Pickwickian," "Pecksniffian," "Bumbledom," "Circumlocution," and many others. Dolly Varden, the pretty heroine of *Barnaby Rudge*, has given her name to a hat; while Mrs. Leo Hunter, The Artful Dodger, Uriah Heep, Bill Sikes, and Mrs. Jarley have become common generic terms.

DICKENS AND SOUTH DEVON:
A LITTLE-KNOWN WEST-COUNTRY LANDMARK.

By CHARLES G. HARPER

THE associations of Dickens with the West are few, but interesting. Early in his career as a reporter he visited Exeter, and "took" a political speech of Lord John Russell's, under the uncomfortable conditions then obtaining; but his one other recorded visit is of a peculiar interest. This was the occasion of his finding a country home for his father and mother at Alphington, outside Exeter.

To reach Alphington you descend the steep Fore Street of the city, cross the Exe by the Exe Bridge, rebuilt in iron the year of grace 1905, and thus come into the suburb of Exeter known as St. Thomas. Here,



ALPHINGTON VILLAGE
From a drawing by Charles G. Harper

at a right and left parting of the ways, you bear to the left, along the old and narrow Alphington Street, which presently gives place to pleasant villas of modern growth. Passing under the archway of the Great Western main line, these are soon left behind, and by the modified rusticity of nurseries of flowers and shrubs we come to Alphington Cross.

Alphington is the distance of exactly one mile from Exeter, as the old milestone at Alphington Cross, placed at the spot where the road forks, tells us, with the additional information that it is nine miles to Chudleigh and 177 to London. The right-hand fork leads, as a sign-post

informs us, to Dunsford; the left-hand conducts into the village of Alphington, and—if you go on long enough—beyond Chudleigh, to Plymouth: along the old coach road, over the bracing heights of Haldon.

Here, however, we are in the levels beside the Exe. Turning at this point the fair city of Exeter is seen, dominated by the twin towers of its ancient cathedral, rising up the sides of the hills that spring from the river. Modernity comes slowly down this way, but even Devonshire is becoming at last leavened with the lump, and the village of Alphington is beginning to feel the effects of the growth of the neighbouring population. Entering it, beneath the bridge of the new railway from Exeter to Christow, a number of little new red-brick £17 houses are observed, facing the dusty high road, directly opposite an old square cottage, with stuccoed front and high-pitched thatched roof, very tottery, and greatly in need of repair. A tablet over the double doorway is painted "Mile-End Cottage." It is, indeed, the object of our pilgrimage, the "beautiful little thatched white house, one storey high," that Dickens, on March 5th, 1839, took for his parents. Writing to Forster, he says:—

"I took a little house for them this morning" (5th March, 1839: from the New London Inn), "and if they are not pleased with it I shall be grievously disappointed. Exacly a mile beyond the city on the Plymouth road there are two white cottages: one is theirs and the other belongs to their landlady. I almost forget the number of rooms; but there is an excellent parlour with two other rooms on the ground-floor; there is really a beautiful little room over the parlour which I am furnishing as a drawing-room, and there is a splendid garden. The paint and paper throughout are new and fresh and cheerful-looking, the place is clean beyond all description, and the neighbourhood I suppose the most beautiful in this most beautiful of English counties. Of the landlady, a Devonshire widow with whom I had the honour of taking lunch to-day, I must make most especial mention. She is a fat, infirm, splendidly fresh-faced country dame, rising sixty and recovering from an attack 'on the nerves'—I thought they never went off the stones, but I find they try country air with the best of us. In the event of my mother's being ill at any time, I really think the vicinity of this good dame, the very picture of respectability and good humour, will be the greatest possible comfort. *Her* furniture and domestic arrangements are a capital picture, but that I reserve till I see you, when I anticipate a hearty laugh. She bears the highest character with the bankers and the clergyman (who formerly lived in *my* cottage himself), and is a kind-hearted worthy capital specimen of the sort of life, or I have no eye for the real and no idea of finding it out."

To Thomas Mitton, Dickens wrote on this subject: "I do assure you that I am charmed with the place and the beauty of the country round about. . . . The situation is charming: meadows in front, an orchard running parallel to the garden hedge, richly-wooded hills closing in the prospect behind, and, away to the left, before a splendid view of the hill on which Exeter is situated, the cathedral towers rising up into the sky in the most picturesque manner possible. I don't think I ever saw so cheerful and pleasant a spot."

There are several detached old houses of this type in Alphington, and very quaint and pleasing they are when kept in good repair and decently painted, but a general air of neglected senility invests Mile-

End Cottage, infinitely distressing. Even the dwarf wall of the front garden is tottering to its fall, the wooden railing a-top is in the last stage of decay, and the upstart new £17 houses, opposite, seem like young vulgarians mocking some poor old ancient, badly down on his luck. I am sorry for Mile-End Cottage, and still would be, even were it not for the association it has; for it is typical of a period, and when it goes, then we shall know less of the ways in which our great grandparents builded, and shall be more and more obsessed by the type of the little vulgarians opposite.

I am quite sure—unless the unexpected happens and some one steps in to save it—that Mile-End Cottage will presently disappear, for it is getting on towards the fatal ninety-ninth year since it was erected on a ninety-nine years' building lease; and then it will revert to the ground-

TOPSHAM
Drawn by Charles G. Harper

landlord, the Earl of Devon, and doubtless will be pulled down to clear the ground for others of the exiguous little boxes of red brick with slate lids, which to-day are your only wear in Suburbia.

The house is now in one occupation. Traditionally, Dickens's people occupied the side to the left hand of the spectator facing it; but local traditions are vague.

A little way down the road is the parish church, with an ancient and singularly slim tower of Devonian red sandstone. A quaint relic is to be noticed over the inner door of the north porch, in the injunction painted on a board, "Please to take off your pattens." "Please to take them off," indeed; who ever puts 'em on nowadays? Where are the country folk who in these days would so demean themselves as to wear pattens? Why, I doubt if many of them could tell you what

pattens are, or rather were, for surely such things were long since ripe for museums.

Over all this beautiful district is the scent of hay and honeysuckle, and (when the south-westerly winds do blow) more than a suspicion of the sea; for the Exe that runs up to and beyond Exeter is for most of the way to that city a tidal estuary, where the gulls scream and fight for sprats on the ebb, and the cockle-gatherers wade. Down the road and across the flat fields that were once salt marshes, you see the waterside village of Topsham; and the scene mellows into an infinite tenderness when the sun sets, the last rays of light streak across the sky, and the lights come out, along the shore.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS.

Jan. 2. Powerstock Branch: Reading of *A Christmas Carol.*

,, 3. London: Dance at Caxton Hall, Westminster, 7.30. Tickets of the Hon. General Secretary at headquarters.

,, 4. Liverpool Branch: "English Humorists of the Nineteenth Century," by Mr. John G. Lee, at Common Hall, Hackin's Hey, at 8.

,, 5. Manchester Branch: Social Evening at Accountants' Hall. Exhibition of Dickensiana, at 7.30.
West London Branch: "Landscapes and Interiors of Dickens," by Mr. H. C. Tyrrel, at Municipal Buildings, Ealing.
Stockport Branch: "Dickens and Children," by Mr. Helm, at Stockport Sunday School, at 8.

,, 8. Notts Branch; "Dickens as a Legal Reformer," by Mr. W. H. Jarvis, at Mechanics' Institute.
Winnipeg Branch: "Mark Tapley and Sam Weller"—a discussion.

,, 11. Birmingham Branch: "Our Mutual Friend," by Mr. W. Farrow, at Great Western Hotel, at 8.
Edinburgh and Leith Branch: *Bleak House*, by Miss I. M. Pagan and Mr. R. Howie, at 5 St. Andrew Square, at 8.

,, 13. Leeds Branch: "A Dickens Fantasy," by Miss Ethel Kidson, at Church Institute, at 7.30.

,, 15. Southampton Branch: Social Evening, at Kell Memorial Hall, at 8.
Brixton Branch: Recital of *Nicholas Nickleby*, by Mr. Frank Speaight, at Brixton Independent Church, at 8.
Blackheath Branch: Lantern Lecture, "The Old Dover Road," by Mr. J. E. Palmer, at Obelisk Hall, Lewisham, at 8.

,, 16. Bristol and Clifton Dickens Society: Discussion, "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," introduced by Mr. G. Rennie Powell, at C.M. Hall, at 7.30.

,, 17. Forest Gate Branch: Limelight Lecture by Mr. R. Allbut, at Public Hall, at 8.
York Branch: "The Pathos of Dickens," by Mr. R. L. Huntley.

,, 18. Liverpool Branch: Discussion, "My Favourite Work of Dickens," at Common Hall, Hackin's Hey, at 8.

,, 25. Edinburgh and Leith Branch: Lecture on "The Colour of Animals," by the Rev. J. Adamson, at 8.

,, 26. Southwark: "Charles Dickens: his Houses, his Portraits, and a Ramble in Dickensland," by G. H. K. Todd, at St. Saviour's Public Library, Southwark Bridge Road.

,, 27. Leeds Branch: "Sketches at our Literary Society," by Mr. Edgar Lee, at Church Institute, at 7.30.
Brighton Branch: Prize Competition in readings and recitals from Dickens's Works.

,, 29. Sheffield Branch: Monthly Meeting, at Cutlers' Hall, at 8.

,, 31. York Branch: *Hard Times*, by Mr. A. Lorraine.

DATCHERY, THE ENIGMA

THE CASE FOR TARTAR

By GEORGE F. GADD

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF A MYSTERY"

MOST of the possible theories regarding the mystery of Datchery have already been the subjects of exhaustive examination, and in one or two cases startling results have been achieved; but, so far, not one has met the gratifying reward of universal acceptance, nor is it very likely that such recognition will be the solutionist's happy lot.

The most elementary explanation of Datchery is what we may call the Professional Detective theory. This suggestion, in relation to the work of an artist of Dickens's quality, is but empty air, and unworthy of serious thought. If Datchery's crop of white hair be a wig—and we are forced so to conclude—the idea of disguise is admitted into the question, and the theory is at once destroyed. If we deny the wig, greater difficulties arise, for we have to explain what Forster meant by the Datchery "*assumption*," and why Dickens surrounded the Buffer with mystery, and made such pointed references to his hatless head of hair.

A more widely accepted interpretation of the author's meaning is that Bazzard is the man; but Mr. Grewgious's clerk, notwithstanding his tragedy and his mysterious absence from Staple Inn, has been conclusively ruled out of court for many reasons.

Grewgious himself has had his supporters, but this theory is, in our opinion, the most impossible of all. Physically considered, his case vanishes into thin air. From other standpoints it is also very unsatisfactory.

There now remain as historical candidates but two characters, Drood and Helena Landless, for the supposition of a personage wholly new to the story is artistically inadmissible. Into the relative merits of Edwin and the young Cingalese girl we need not inquire, since they have of late been much before the public, and have already received attention in the pages of this journal.

Mr. Datchery's movements and bearing on his introduction to the reader are apparently those of a man who has been informed of the personages and localities involved in his inquiry, but who has never before been in personal contact with either. Thus, on being directed to Mrs. Tope's, he becomes bewildered, and boggles about the cathedral tower "with a general impression on his mind that Mrs. Tope's is somewhere very near it." Deputy escorts him for a distance, and points out an arched passage. "That's Tope's?" queries the Buffer. "Yer lie," answers the gamin, "that's Jarsper's." "Indeed?" says Datchery, *with a second look of some interest.* He takes the first opportunity of interviewing Jasper, and by refusing to leave the latter's presence before Mr. Sapsea shows that he does not fear to expose himself to the choirmaster's keenest scrutiny. All this seems to argue that he really is a stranger to Cloisterham and its inhabitants, but there is no doubt that he has a firm grasp of the "Worshipful the Mayor's" pet frailty, and makes use of that important knowledge to gain his ends.

Let us scrutinize this mysterious personage ourselves, and see how far the portrait Dickens presented has its counterpart in the picture we desire to superimpose. It may be taken for granted that, whoever Mr. Datchery may be, he is fully aware of the extreme danger of the task he has set himself, and it follows that he is not devoid of physical courage. It is even more clear that he is courteous in bearing, and at his ease in society. His age is left to be assumed, for he is always written of as a "single," and never as an "old" buffer; while the phrase "living on his means" is insisted on with peculiar emphasis.

He is described as having "a military air," and it may be that this characteristic is the explanation of Mr. Sapsea's three queries as to his profession: but another and more subtle reason is at least possible. Army, navy, and diplomacy are the guesses made. Is there something in Mr. Datchery's *face* which suggests *foreign service* of some kind? Mr. Sapsea is hardly keen observer enough to so emphatically read what was, after all, only "something" of a military air. The point is worth noting, and we shall explain its application immediately.

In the chapter preceding that of Mr. Datchery's arrival, another "stranger" is introduced to the reader. A stranger who is first discovered in a situation dangerous to life and limb, bnt who occupies it with cool unconcern.

"A handsome gentleman with a young face, but with *an older figure* in its robustness and its breadth of shoulder, *so extremely sunburnt* that the contrast between his brown visage and the white forehead shaded out of doors by his hat" was almost ludicrous. "I beg your pardon," says this personage, addressing Landless with the identical form of words which Datchery uses in opening conversation with Jasper, and in a whimsical manner he introduces himself as "the beans." His object in seeking friendship with Neville is a kindly and thoughtful one; but he courteously apologizes for the liberty, explaining that he is always afraid of inconveniencing busy men, "*being an idle man.*" This last phrase might almost be an echo of Mr. Datchery's "idle buffer living on his means." Lieutenant Tartar—there is no reason to withhold the name—also lives upon his means, having retired from the Navy in order that he might succeed to his uncle's fortune. Note the whimsical manner of this breezy character, which has "a touch of merry earnestness that makes it doubly whimsical," and compare it with the precisely similar style of Datchery. Mr. Proctor thought he could detect a resemblance between Drood and Datchery in this respect. How much greater is the similarity if for Edwin we substitute Tartar! No character in the book is at all comparable to the Buffer, excepting the Lieutenant, and in that single instance the likeness is surprising.

There is a strange paragraph at the end of the seventeenth chapter of the novel, following Tartar's disappearance below.

Mr. Grewgious—mysteriously introduced—is pictured for a moment at his solitary watch, his gaze wandering to the stars, "as if he would have read in them something that was hidden from him." This dark fragment receives a brilliant flash of illumination by the light of the present theory. So regarded, it is a truly Dickensian touch. Otherwise, it is inscrutable.

We now come to the eighteenth chapter. At what period in the story does Datchery make his first appearance? We are not told exactly, and the opening phrase, "At about this time," is in itself suspicious. From the first chapter onward to this point it is possible to trace an unbroken sequence of events: from the nineteenth chapter to the conclusion of the work the orderly narrative may be continued. We can even connect the chapters on either side of the Buffer's "busy afternoon," but the events of that same afternoon are entirely detached from their surroundings, and their situation cannot be accurately determined.

We have, therefore, some ground for assuming that Dickens, at this part of his story, availed himself of the licence, not infrequent in fiction, of temporarily abandoning the strictly chronological order. It is not until Chapter XXI, and "a day or so" after his introduction to Neville, that Tartar is taken into full confidence regarding Jasper. His offer of the use of his rooms is speedily followed by a promise to call openly upon Neville, with the object of drawing the prowling rascal; but the further progress of the story might possibly have revealed that Tartar's use for this purpose suggested to Grewgious a development leading to the Datchery assumption. The Lieutenant was not personally acquainted with Jasper, but disguise might be considered necessary, for Tartar's movements at Staple Inn had no doubt come under the watcher's observation.

Of the Navy man's fitness for the work in hand there can be no doubt. He was unoccupied, was powerful, reliable, determined, courageous. He had saved Crisparkle's life. Was he to be the chief protector of Rosa, with whom he had so rapidly fallen in love? At least, a strong incentive is apparent.

Crisparkle could very easily put him in possession of useful facts regarding the localities and personages of Cloisterham, and very likely it would be suggested that Mrs. Tope's was a convenient lodging to make his headquarters, since he would there have Jasper constantly under his eye. He would be told that Tope's was near the cathedral, and Jasper's gatehouse would, perhaps, be described; but further direction on the spot might well be necessary to an absolute stranger. To inquire for Tope's directly was out of the question, and Datchery's "Anything cathedrally now?" is a clever way of suggesting to the Crozier waiter what he really wants without awakening curiosity.

The interview with the opium woman probably contains the key to the enigma, if we only knew where to look for it. Datchery is here more vividly presented than elsewhere, and various solutionists have professed to find in these passages important reasons for their contentions.

A seafaring man who, probably, has visited Eastern ports, may reasonably be supposed to know something of opium-smoking and its effects. Datchery has, perhaps, noted its traces in Jasper. Now, when Puffer makes her agitated appearance, he says "Halloa!" in a low voice, presumably wondering what there is unusual about her. His sudden start when, later, she confesses to the habit, may be taken as the firing of his train of thought.

It is a point worth noting that, prior to this, Mr. Datchery walks at

the old woman's side, with his hands clasped behind him—"as the wont of such buffers is," explains Dickens, or, we suggest, as is *the wont of the naval officer when pacing the quarter-deck.*

"Been here before, my good woman?" "Once in all my life." "*Ay Ay!*" comments the Buffer, unconsciously employing a truly nautical expression.

After the interview he turns homeward pondering.

"As *mariners* approaching an iron-bound coast may look along the beams of the warning light to the haven lying beyond it that may never be reached, *so Mr. Datchery's wistful gaze is directed to this beacon, and beyond.*"

Read and compare with this what is said of Tartar as he and Rosa enter his chambers at Staple Inn.

"Rosa thought . . . that his far-seeing eyes looked as if they had been used to watch danger afar off, *and to watch it without flinching, drawing nearer and nearer.*"

The parallel is complete.

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

XIII

I

AND thou, great Dickens! thou, whose pathos sweet
So oft have sank calm precepts on the soul;
The rich, the poor, they both thy writings greet—
'Tis wit, 'tis humour, under wise control.
When discontent and anger cast their gloom
Upon the poor, how happily they find
That poverty is not the human doom,
Which sinks most sadly on the human mind.

II

There they may read that love can sanctify
The heart of care, the meal of scanty fare;
There they may read that love can glorify,
And render splendour, wealth, and care.
When sighs and tears chase smiles and hope away,
When discontented with his lowly lot,
Once more the poor man laughingly is gay,
Cheered by the semblance of his pretty "Dot."

III

Who has not read *The Cricket on the Hearth?*
Although I say I never yet could find
In any work, or any place on earth,
A little Dot, but in Charles Dickens' mind.
I am in fault, no doubt the author's right,
And Dots as plentiful as Dots there are;
And for her presence on a Sabbath's night,
How many a husband thanks his lucky star.

ROSE ELLEN HENDRIKS (? 1846).

From *Chit Chat*, a poem in twelve cantos.

NATIONAL DICKENS LIBRARY

THE appeal which has been made in these pages elsewhere for funds to purchase the Dickens collection of the late F. G. Kitton has not met with the success which such a scheme demands. For many years past it has been remarked in various directions how extraordinary it is that the multifarious books and ana which have grown round the name and fame of England's most popular novelist have not been gathered together, and a library established as a national monument to his name, much as has been done for Shakespeare at Stratford—only, of course, in a smaller way.

The late Mr. F. G. Kitton, who was the author of numerous books on Dickensian subjects, and was a Vice-President of the Dickens Fellowship, left a collection of Dickensiana which comprises some three hundred books on Dickens and his works, the majority of these being autograph copies; over two hundred different portraits of the novelist; numerous volumes of magazine and newspaper articles relating to Dickens; pictures, programmes, play-bills, etc.; autograph letters from famous admirers of the novelist; several plays based upon the novels; original reports of speeches by Dickens; numerous pamphlets, etc. etc. There is also a splendid collection of original Dickens drawings by such well-known artists as Brock, Leslie Ward, Rainey, and others, as well as many drawings by the late Mr. Kitton himself (including most of the originals of his illustrations to *A Week's Tramp in Dickens Land*). It is unnecessary to say that many of the articles in the collection are unique and not possible of duplication.

It seemed to the Council of the Fellowship that this was an excellent opportunity to obtain the nucleus of a National Dickens Library. To purchase the collection a sum, which may be roughly stated at £400, is required, and all who have derived pleasure and profit from the books of Charles Dickens—and who has not?—are appealed to to assist in the raising of this comparatively small amount. The Library Committee of the Corporation of London have expressed their willingness to house the collection in the Guildhall, but it will be held in trust for the nation by the Council of the Dickens Fellowship.

Charles Dickens may truly be regarded as a unique national possession, and so the Council of the Fellowship make this further appeal with confidence, believing that a National Library would appropriately help to perpetuate his memory, and the good work which he strove so earnestly to do.

Contributions will be gladly received by the Hon. General Secretary of the Fellowship, at Whitcomb House, Whitcomb Street, W.C.

Since last month the following donations have been received:—

Chas. Letts, £2. 2s.; Collected by Miss E. M. Miniken, £1. 1s.; A. A. George, £1. 1s.; per Southampton Branch, 15s. 6d.; Tom Gallon, 10s. 6d.; per G. W. Davis, 10s.; Miss Charlotte Bremner, Lionel Barnett, Mrs. E. C. Davies, 5s. each; E. H. Tomlin, 3s.; F. A. and Miss Spinney, Ernest W. Newnham, Miss Edith Mead, N. Simmonds, Fred W. Ainger, 2s. 6d. each; Miss Ethel L. Taylor, per Birmingham Branch, 2s. each; Chas. Ross, 1s. 6d.; Mr. Chevob, Mrs. Hill, Anon., 1s. each. Amount to 20 December, £19. 15s.

AN EXAMINATION IN DICKENS'S WORKS

DURING the present year we are setting as a competition a series of examination papers on certain of the works of Dickens. There will be twenty questions for each issue of *The Dickensian*, devoted to one book each month. We offer six prizes for the best answers to the complete set of twelve papers as follows :—

1st Prize : A complete set of the Fireside Edition of the works of Dickens, 22 volumes.

2nd Prize : *The Real Dickens Land*, by H. Snowden Ward.

3rd Prize : *The Dickens Country*, by F. G. Kitton.

4th, 5th, 6th Prizes : *Rambles in Dickens Land*, by Robert Allbut.

All answers should be sent in on foolscap paper bearing the heading of the particular examination paper. Do not repeat the questions, but simply number the answers to tally with the questions.

The answers should be addressed to the Editor, at Whitcomb House, Whitcomb Street, W.C., marked "EXAMINATION," and must be forwarded *to reach that address by the 18th of each month.*

The correct answers will appear in the following issue, and the name of each competitor, with the number of marks his or her paper has earned, given. The prizes will be allotted at the end of the year.

The first book chosen is *Sketches by Boz*, and below are appended twenty questions thereon to be answered.

The adjudicators are Mr. Robert Allbut, Mr. J. W. T. Ley, and the Editor, the decision of whom will be final.

I—SKETCHES BY BOZ

1. Particularize Illustration by Cruikshank, containing portraits of four gentlemen connected with the publication of this book.
2. What special legacy was left by a Parish Official (deceased) to the Vestry Board by whom he held his appointment?
3. What infrequent circumstance was conducive to revolutionary and agnostic sentiments in the sphere of out-of-door employment?
4. Quote references to Herod, Cincinnatus, and Belzoni.
5. What special laws are (satirically) commended as promoting good fellowship in society?
6. Who was Mr. Ellis, and what was his friend's usual line of argument?
7. Give recipe for non-alcoholic negus as supplied at an evening party.
8. Furnish references to Gretna Green, Swan River, and King's Bench Prison.
9. Indicate the English equivalent to an East Indian "Gum-gum."
10. In what connexion is there mentioned special advertisement of a well-known Toilet Requisite?
11. What was the *nom de plume* adopted by an author who largely used polysyllables?
12. Who was Signor Lobskini?
13. On what occasion was a Byronic quotation mistaken as to its authorship?
14. Quote references to Caleb Williams and the Works of Richardson and Mrs. Radcliffe.
15. What characters are specially mentioned in connexion with the Parliamentary Refreshment Rooms seventy years since?
16. What Shakespearean personage is referred to in association with a supper-gourmand? Refer also to Paul Pry and Robinson Crusoe.
17. Give quotation of familiar line of old English poetry.
18. Quote mention of Damon and Pythias, Ixion and the Colossus.
19. Give reference to the special characteristic of a well-known heroine of Oriental celebrity.
20. What was the first contribution by Dickens to periodical literature, afterwards included in *Sketches by Boz?*

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

LONDON

MR. FRANK SPEAIGHT'S RECITAL OF THE "CAROL"

THE December meeting at the Memorial Hall was devoted to a recital of *A Christmas Carol*, by Mr. Frank Speaight. Nothing fresh can be said of the dramatic and elocutionary power of Mr. Speaight. He was in splendid form, and held the audience's attention from first to last. Mr. Arthur Waugh occupied the chair. During the evening a collection was made for the charitable funds of the Fellowship, which realized £12.

NEEDLEWORK AND CHARITABLE GUILD

THE second annual sale of work in connexion with the Guild took place at St. Bride's Institute, in the City, on the afternoon and evening of 6 December. Mr. Arthur W. A'Beckett performed the opening ceremony at three o'clock. The Rev. Canon Benham occupied the chair, and was supported on the platform by Miss Georgina Hogarth, Mrs. Henry F. Dickens, the Misses Dickens, Miss E. M. Miniken, Mr. B. W. Matz, and Mr. J. W. T. Ley.

Canon Benham and Mr. A'Beckett made appropriate speeches, each speaking of the good work the Guild was doing in its special department. There were seven well-stocked stalls devoted to plain and fancy work, household goods, confectionery, gentlemen's ties, etc., flowers, books, post cards, etc.; they were presided over by Mesdames Lickis, Matz, Butt, Wort, the Misses A. Smith, Sammée, Jessie Wort, Elliott, C. Blake, M. Nielson, W. M. Matz, T. Niedermann, and E. M. Miniken, whilst Mrs. Will Crooks and Miss O'Flanagan also assisted. Good business was done at each of the stalls, which resulted in a substantial addition being made to the funds of the Guild. One of the features of the bazaar was Mrs. Gamp's Umbrella, presided over by the lady herself in the person of Miss Nicholls, which was well stocked with mysterious packets, in which a roaring trade was done.

During the afternoon and evening an excellent programme was provided, and was greatly enjoyed by all visitors. Besides songs and recitations, it also included a recital by Mr. W. Miles, a dramatic scene, "Mrs. Gamp's Tea Party," in which Miss Nicholls as Sairey Gamp and Miss Langford as Betsey Prig caused much amusement; and nursery rhymes, tableaux arranged by Miss Miniken for the children. The Kitcarty Ladies' Band and the John Barnes Philanthropic Orchestra played selections at intervals.

During the evening Mr. Will Crooks, M.P., visited the bazaar and made an appropriate speech.

Great praise is due to Miss Miniken for the good she is doing in this very worthy branch of the Fellowship's work, and to her committee who so ably helped her in carrying out the details connected with the bazaar. O.S.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP DRAMATIC CLUB

A NEW offshoot of the Dickens Fellowship—an amateur dramatic club—was successfully inaugurated at the Cripplegate Institute, on the evening of Tuesday, December 19th, before a large and enthusiastic audience. The birth of the society was due principally to Mr. James Chapman, Hon. Stage Manager; but the success of the present performance must be ascribed to the energies of Mr. Walter Dextor, the Secretary, and Mr. W. Teignmouth Shore, the Assistant Hon. Stage Manager, and both must have felt that their hard work was thoroughly appreciated, and effectually rewarded by the event. The programme consisted of Miss Isabella Pagan's adaptation from *Nicholas Nickleby*, "The Gentleman in the Next House," and a stage version of the

famous case of Bardell *v.* Pickwick, arranged by Mr. J. W. T. Ley. It is notoriously difficult to get good adaptations from Dickens, but perhaps the "trial scene" was a little too familiar to the audience to sustain an undiminished interest; most of those present had recently seen Mr. Frank Speaight and other reciters in the famous Buzfuz speech, and something a little fresher would possibly have aroused more enthusiasm. At the same time, it must be recorded that the audience was thoroughly pleased, and took every point with gusto.

In the first piece the honours went easily, "hands down," to Mrs. Teignmouth Shore, who, as Mrs. Nickleby, had a tremendously exhausting part, being on the stage all the time, and sustained her lively and indomitable garrulity without a moment's break. Her performance was full of little natural touches, and justified all the applause it received as a really finished piece of acting. Mr. Shore, as the "gentleman from the next house," was immensely popular with the audience, and carried his part through with plentiful spirit and a most genial assumption of the airs and graces of imbecility. Nicholas and Kate Nickleby both looked charming, without having much chance of making points, but Miss La Creevy had better opportunities, of which Miss Edith Browne availed herself *con amore*. The piece was vociferously cheered, and Mrs. Shore received a gorgeous bouquet from the hands of Miss Pagan, who was an interested spectator of her own play. The trial scene from *Pickwick* was taken throughout upon the lines of frank burlesque. In this way it gained many laughs which would have been lost to more natural acting, but it could not avoid a certain air of caricature throughout. Mr. Ley, however, played Serjeant Buzfuz without any extravagance, and spoke the great speech with spirit; and Mr. Percy Merriman was quite in the picture as Sam Weller. It should be added that there was an excellent band; and that, while the court scene was a little beyond the resources of the Cripplegate scene-dock, the garden set was entirely charming and much above the average of the scenery used in amateur performances.

A. W.

AN EVENING WITH "DAVID COPPERFIELD"

A VERY unique and delightful entertainment was given on 20 December at the Institutional Church, familiarly known as "Whitefield's," in the Tottenham Court Road, under the unostentatious title of "An evening with *David Copperfield*." It was arranged by Mr. Henry E. Gaze, who is well known to a large circle of Dickensians, and comprised a series of twelve illustrative scenes and tableaux in which members of Whitefield's Mutual Improvement Society impersonated forty different characters in costume from the famous story. Mr. Gaze himself supplied the narrative portion of the book connecting the scenes and tableaux in his masterly manner. The programme was concluded with that delightful Christmas scene from *A Christmas Carol*, "Mr. Fizziwig's Ball."

The standard of the whole entertainment was very high indeed throughout, and the large assembly of spectators, some 700 in number, were more than highly delighted. It were invidious, perhaps, to single out, from so generally excellent a performance, individuals for special mention, but we may venture the opinion, without in any way minimizing the work of others in their respective parts, that the honours of the evening fell upon the gentlemen who took the parts of Uriah Heep and Mr. Peggotty respectively, for their impersonations were finished to a degree.

The meeting was presided over by the Rev. C. Silvester Horne. Many members of the Fellowship, including some of the Council, were present; and at the close Mr. Silvester Horne, in proposing a vote of thanks to all concerned, invited Mr. Sidney Marriott, one of the Hon. Secretaries of the Fellowship, to second the motion, which he did in a few appropriate and felicitous remarks.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

A MEETING of the above was held on Friday, 24 November, at the Great Western Hotel. An enthusiastic gathering listened to an excellent paper given by Mr. H. S. Moore on *The Chimes*. He said that when Dickens had completed it he believed it to be far and away superior to its sister work, the *Carol*. However, although very popular at the time it was first published, the sale of the *Carol* has far exceeded it. As in all Charles Dickens's works, there was a strong tone of warning to the great mass of humanity against bumbledom and hypocrisy; they were an appeal to man's better self, to its sincerity. There were also readings by Mr. R. J. Taylor and Mr. G. W. Davis. The Fellowship at Birmingham is rapidly growing, both in force of numbers and influence, and it is hoped that before long its membership will reach two hundred.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

MR. HENRY BRISTOW took the chair on 16 December, at Steine House, when Mr. Henry Davey read a paper on *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. He was assisted by Mr. Francis James Gauntlett, who gave illustrative readings and recitations from the novel. Mr. Davey reviewed the many previous attempts made to unravel the mystery, and agreed with some of the solutions propounded, especially recommending the recent volume on the subject from the pen of Mr. Cuming Walters; but held that all reasonings were purely speculative ones; that the story had not progressed far enough for one to be absolutely certain, except in details, as to the general idea of the story. He offered new theories on favourite debatable points.

BRISTOL AND CLIFTON DICKENS SOCIETY (AFFILIATED)

THE third meeting of the session was held in the C.M.S. Hall, on 21 November. There was a fair attendance. An interesting discussion on *Bleak House*, ably conducted by Mr. E. R. Wilkinson, who read an enlightening and instructive paper on the many charms which Charles Dickens's popular work possesses, formed the chief item of the evening. The rest of the evening was spent in discussing the chief points of the book, and several of the members introduced many original and clever remarks about them. Short selections were also read from some of the most pleasing chapters in the novel.

The December meeting was held on 12 December. Mr. A. J. Tonkin presided. The Secretary (Mr. C. Andrews) read an instructive paper on "Christmas Books and Christmas Stories," which introduced many well-known characters. Several members read short and varied excerpts from various of the stories. At the close of the proceedings a collection was made in aid of a deserving case which had come under the society's notice.

BRIXTON BRANCH

A MEETING was held at Brixton Independent Church on 20 November. The chair was occupied by Mr. W. Davenport, the President, who addressed the audience in good Dickensian style. A reading, entitled "The Fortunes of the Wooden Midshipman," was given by Mr. Robert Allbut. It comprised the collateral interest of the tale as connected with the establishment of Solomon Gills, 157 Leadenhall Street, and the fortunes and misfortunes of the dramatis personæ specially incidental thereto—Captain Cuttle, Bunsby, Mrs. MacStinger, Mr. Toots, Florence Dombey, and Walter Gay. The reading, given in two parts, was relieved by songs excellently rendered by Miss Hoch.

On Friday, 17 November, some Brixtonian members of the Fellowship gave an evening's entertainment at the Lecture Hall of the Congregational Church, New Malden. The chair was occupied by Mr. Sidney Marriott, who delivered an address explanatory of the aims and objects of the Dickens

Fellowship. Recitals were given by Mr. Howard Rose ("Dick Swiveller and the Marchioness," and the "Owl Critic"), Mr. Robert Allbut (from *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Martin Chuzzlewit*), and Mr. William Miles ("Richard Doubledick" and "Mr. Winkle's Misadventures at Bath").

EDINBURGH AND LEITH BRANCH

AT the meeting of this branch held on 23 November, Miss J. J. Stevenson read a paper on *Bleak House*, and Mr. G. Brand gave an enjoyable reading, "The Tuggs's at Ramsgate."

On Thursday, 7 December, a large audience assembled to hear Mr. Alex Eddington, Hon. Vice-President, lecture. The subject, "Motive in Art," proved most attractive. Mr. Eddington gave a rapid survey of the celebrated works of the illustrious artist, G. F. Watts, R.A., O.M., taking them in groups —portraiture, landscapes, and allegorical subjects—pointing out the motive in each case and showing with great insight and critical ability the unrivalled success of the pictures in each group, both in colouring and design. Mr. James Cadenhead, A.R.S.A., R.S.W., was in the chair.

FOLKESTONE BRANCH

A MEETING of the above branch was held at the Town Hall on 24 November. The meeting was called by the Council of the parent society on account of the branch's inactivity during the last year. Mr. B. W. Matz, who presided, said he understood that business and uncertain health had kept Mr. Trent from carrying on the work, and would prevent him from continuing to do so. The chief business that night would be to elect another gentleman as Secretary. Mr. G. Colman said that in a town with the intelligence of Folkestone they could not get people to support the religion that Charles Dickens taught was to him surprising. He wished to express the thanks of the meeting to Mr. Trent for his efforts in connexion with the association, and he deeply deplored that he and other members had not given Mr. Trent the assistance which he should have had. It was unanimously proposed that the branch be continued, and that some of the members present form a committee to meet as arranged until a suitable person should be found willing to take up the duties of Secretary. In the meantime Mr. Colman offered to take up the duties of Secretary *pro tem.*, and this was agreed to. Mr. Colman expressed his willingness to do all he could for the furtherance of the society's interest.

HASTINGS AND ST. LEONARDS BRANCH

A VERY successful gathering was held at the Queen's Hotel on 21 November in aid of the funds of the Hastings and District Nurses' Home. Mr. H. C. Willmott presided over a crowded gathering. An unusually good musical programme had been arranged by Mr. Herman Brearley, and it was carried out with the greatest possible success. Mrs. Tyler gave a reading from *Bleak House*, and Miss Stringer "The Enchantress," while Miss Winifred Dixon, Mr. Harry Vidler, Mr. J. Ellery Pollard, Mr. W. Scotcher, and Mr. C. Brearley also contributed. Mr. George Locke read a most interesting paper, entitled "Bits of Natural History in Charles Dickens's Life."

HULL BRANCH

THE second public meeting outrivalled the first. On 17 November about a hundred and twenty friends were present, the President occupying the chair. After an interesting speech in which he eulogized the Fellowship and its work, Mr. A. W. Hayes, of Nottingham, gave a humorous reading bearing on Dick Swiveller and his doings, concluding with a clever recital of the death of "Little Nell." The evening's enjoyment was greatly augmented by vocal and instrumental music. The total membership is about eighty-five.

On 1 December the third meeting took place, when Mr. W. Willingham read a paper on the "Christmas Books," which was followed by an illustrated

reading of the *Carol* by Mr. Murray. Mr. W. Barry also gave some interesting recollections of *The Chimes*, showing, through the interpretation of Trotty Veck's character, how greatly Dickens excelled in his wonderful conceptions of human life.

On 15 December Mr. Ellison read a paper on "Dickens as an Interpreter of Human Joys and Sorrows," and also gave an impersonation of "Little Nell's Grandfather," whilst Mr. Tindal again reverted to *The Chimes*.

LEYTON AND DISTRICT BRANCH

WITH the object of inaugurating a branch in the above district, a meeting, arranged by the Council of the Fellowship, took place at the Wesleyan Schoolroom, Leyton, on 11 December, when Mr. Watson Thornton gave his lecture-recital, entitled "Scenes and Characters from Charles Dickens," in which he passed in rapid review the story of Dickens's life and work, giving recitals from the novels to illustrate his remarks. Unfortunately the night was one of those real, solid foggy ones which suggest madness in those persons who venture beyond their own doors on such occasions. However, Mr. Thornton braved the elements, and those forty or fifty enthusiasts who did likewise were well repaid for their courage. In the interval, Mr. B. W. Matz, who was supported by Miss Neidermann, Mr. S. Marriott, Mr. J. W. T. Ley, and Mr. Miller, representing the Council, explained the objects and aims of the Fellowship. It was agreed to start the branch, and Mr. Hickman, jun., of 4 Mornington Road, Leytonstone, was appointed Hon. Secretary. There is every reason to anticipate a strong branch in the district, and members of the Fellowship and admirers of Dickens living in the neighbourhood should communicate with him.

MANCHESTER BRANCH

AT the December meeting Mr. W. H. Vaughan read a paper on "Dickens's Lawyers." He remarked that the lawyer had never been a popular character in literature, and from the majority of writers he had received scant justice. Charles Dickens lived in an age when solicitors did not, as a rule, occupy the same social position as now, and he wrote of them somewhat unfairly, exhibiting the vast majority of the thirty-five characters of barristers and solicitors depicted in his pages as people one would not care to meet in private life, and if possible to be avoided. Of the Common Law practitioners those mentioned in *Pickwick* must hold the first place, and of these Mr. Perker stood in the front rank, although the late Sir Frank Lockwood, in his book *The Law and Lawyers of 'Pickwick'*, had tried to displace him from that position. With regard to Dodson and Fogg, no solicitor of any standing would contend that they were justified in taking up the case against Mr. Pickwick. In these days to compare a solicitor to Dodson and Fogg was actionable, as was proved some years ago at the Lancaster Assizes, where a solicitor recovered damages for being so slandered. Mr. Pell was a representative of a class of solicitor happily becoming extinct, known as the "Bar Parlour Lawyer." Referring to Chancery lawyers, Mr. Vaughan said that as at the time when *Bleak House* was written there were only three Chancery judges, he was not surprised at the slow progress which was made in the administration of the work of that court. In Mr. Tulkinghorn one had the type of the fast-disappearing family solicitor. Dickens presumably did not know much about conveyancing, and was incorrect in saying that "Mr. Tulkinghorn would require his drafts to be drawn by special pleaders in the Temple, on mysterious instructions," for as Mr. Tulkinghorn did not appear to have had a Common Law practice all his drafts would be drawn by a conveyancing and equity draftsman whose chambers would be in Lincoln's Inn. A discussion followed.

Mrs. Clay gave as a recitation the story of Mrs. Quilp's Tea Party.

MELBOURNE BRANCH

SINCE the last report fifty-six new members have been enrolled. The November meeting was a good one, with a large attendance and an exceptionally fine programme. Mr. Du Soir gave an excellent address on "Dickens and the Thames." Miss Lyttleton read "Horatio Sparkins" very effectively. Mr. Frank Scrivenor contributed a short paper entitled "Boz Land," in which he introduced a number of popular characters. Miss Windas recited "Rosa Dartle" with dramatic effect. Miss Bale read a paper on "Wemmick," and the Secretary concluded the programme with a recital of "Bob Sawyer's Party." During the month several members gave a performance of the Pickwick Trial Scene in aid of the Building Fund of the Elsternwick Presbyterian Church, of which the Vice-President, Rev. E. Rorke, is minister.

NOTTS BRANCH

A VERY enjoyable conversazione was held in the Mechanics' Institute on Monday, 4 December. There were about fifty persons present, and among them a few new members. A very good programme was arranged, the Dickens items of which were recitations, "Dr. Marigold," by the Hon. Secretary, and "Sam Weller's Valentine," by Miss Ross.

PORTSMOUTH BRANCH

A LARGE audience at the Albert Hall, Southsea, 20 November, had the pleasure of listening to an admirable Dickensian recital by Mr. Walter Thornton. His excellent elocution was much enhanced in its interest by a series of interpellated critiques and descriptions.

Opening with a brief but apt allusion to the great author's childhood at Portsmouth, Mr. Thornton traced the life of Dickens to the end, illustrating his remarks with suitable recitals from the works. *Sketches by Boz* were first drawn on by Mr. Thornton, and then later came the autobiography from *David Copperfield* to describe the hardships of Dickens's childhood. "David Copperfield and the Waiter," "Simon Tappertit," and "Little Nell" were the topics of three excellent recitations, and, needless to say, *A Christmas Carol* and the sayings of Tiny Tim were largely drawn upon. The *Carol* showed Dickens as a true Christian, said Mr. Thornton. *Pickwick Papers* occupied the concluding stages of the recital, which was delivered over the space of two hours without a note or aid of any description. The artiste was never at fault or wanting for a word, and the feat was one of no small mnemonic power. *Pickwick*, he claimed, was the most humorous book ever written. In costume Mr. Thornton recited "Serjeant Buzfuz," and he impersonated the forensic twang of voice with an effect true to life. A touching *in memoriam* epilogue brought a literary treat to a conclusion.

ROCHESTER BRANCH

ON 13 December Mr. Frank Speaight recited *A Christmas Carol* at the Castle Hall, under the auspices of the branch, to an appreciative audience.

SHEFFIELD BRANCH

THE Sheffield Branch held their monthly November meeting in the old Banqueting Hall, in the Cutlers' Hall, on 20 November. Mr. R. W. Dodsworth was in the chair, and over three hundred members were present. The various contributions were illustrated by an excellent set of lantern slides, and a most enjoyable evening was spent. Mr. T. W. Padmore (Hon. Sec.) read "Bob Sawyer's Party" and the "Eatanswill Election"; Mr. G. W. Parker contributed "Dotheboys Hall"; Miss Alice Eaton gave "Copperfield and the Waiter"; and Mr. Walter Swift read "Bumble's Courtship."

On 28 November Mr. Frank Speaight gave his recital of *David Copperfield*, in the Montgomery Hall, to a crowded audience, which was wholly delighted at his performance. A substantial sum will be available as a result, to be devoted to the cause of the destitute children of the city.

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

A WELL attended meeting was held at the Kell Hall on 20 November, under the presidency of Mr. J. R. Smith, J.P. The gathering proved a most enjoyable one. The President contributed an enjoyable reading from *Dr. Marigold*. The main feature of the evening was a paper by the Rev. W. A. C. Chevalier, entitled "My Reminiscences of Charles Dickens and some of his Contemporaries." The rev. gentleman's paper was highly appreciated, and was listened to with close interest and attention.

The third meeting of the session took place at the Kell Hall on 18 December, readings being given by Mrs. Seaward, the Rev. W. Garwood, and the Rev. W. T. Martin. Two well-rendered part-songs, by the S.G.C. party, gained well-merited applause. The chief features of the evening, however, were selections from the *Carol*, by the President, Mr. J. R. Smith, also his Christmas address, in which he spoke of the grand truths of Christian kindness in caring for our poorer brethren at this season of the year, as emphasized by the writings of the great master, Charles Dickens. Reference also was made to the advantage of contributing to the National Dickens Library Fund, and a collection for that purpose was received.

STOCKPORT BRANCH

THE December meeting was held in the Librarian's Room, with Mr. Holt in the chair. Mrs. Dawson read a paper on "Charles Dickens and Christmas." Dickens taught English men and women that their sympathy ought to go out to the poor and needy at Christmas time. He was the truest philanthropist, the warmest heart, the brightest brain that ever drove a pen. In half a dozen Christmas stories he taught us what a Christmas, a really merry Christmas, is—a Christmas that used, but did not abuse, the good gifts of God ; a season for making merry, not only in the halls of wealth, but also in the hovels of poverty. The meeting then discussed the question, "How can we assist in charitable work?" After some discussion it was agreed that a recital of Dickens's works be given early in the new year. The proceeds to be given to providing a free meal to the poor children of the town. The Secretary, Mr. W. Hatfield, then read a paper on the Dickens country.

TORONTO (CANADA) BRANCH

THE first regular meeting of the branch for the season took the form of a dinner at one of the down-town cafés on the evening of 31 October, followed by an hour's programme of a Dickensian nature. About sixty members and their friends attended, and the evening proved thoroughly enjoyable. The President, Mr. E. S. Williamson, occupied the chair, and urged upon those present the desirability of endeavouring to increase the membership to two hundred, which he thought could be easily accomplished. Mr. J. W. Bengough read an original ode dedicated to the society. Mr. James L. Hughes spoke on his favourite topic, "Dickens as an Educator." Mr. Frank Yeigh made some interesting comparisons between the Toronto of to-day and the Toronto of Dickens's first visit in 1842. Mr. J. B. Harris recited a selection from *A Christmas Carol*. Mrs. R. A. Donald spoke of the work of the Home for Incurable Children, in which the branch proposes to take an interest. Miss Edith S. Scott sang "The Ivy Green" and other selections, and Mr. G. L. McCrea also spoke briefly. It was

unanimously decided that the work of the branch along charitable lines should for the present be directed towards assisting the Home for Incurable Children. The Christmas dinner for the home will this year be supplied by the branch, and funds will be raised by entertainment for the establishment of a Dickens Cot.

WEST LONDON SUBURBAN BRANCH

THE monthly meeting took place in the Lecture Hall of the Municipal Buildings, Ealing, on 17 December. Mr. J. W. T. Ley read a paper on "Dickens and Christmas," in which he showed that the modern Christmas-time with its festivities, its parties, its theatre-goings, and above all the spirit of benevolence and charity which is manifested at this time of the year, are mainly due to the influence brought about by the works of Dickens. Mr. Ley traced the history and the writing of the famous Christmas books and stories in a full and comprehensive manner, showing great intimacy with his subject. The remainder of the evening was taken up with readings. Mr. W. Howard gave the "Fifth Stave" of the *Carol;* the Rev. J. W. Gardner a selection from *Pickwick;* Miss Edith Mead the story of "Gabriel Grubb"; and Mr. W. Chevob "Christmas at Dingley Dell." Mr. B. W. Matz, in the absence of the President, occupied the chair.

WINNIPEG BRANCH

ON Tuesday, 7 November, lovers of Dickens in Winnipeg were provided with an excellent treat by Mr. E. S. Williamson, President of the Toronto branch, who gave a recital of *A Christmas Carol*, and the large audience that gathered to hear him was carried away with enthusiasm. The whole story was followed with breathless interest, and at its close the audience displayed great enthusiasm. Professor S. J. Will, in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Williamson, sent the greetings of the Winnipeg Branch to the Toronto Branch.

On Wednesday night the Pickwick Club entertained Mr. Williamson to dinner in a Pickwickian fashion.

On Monday, 13 November, "Micawber" was the subject of able papers by Rev. H. H. St. G. Buttoun, B.A., and Drs. Spurgeon Campbell and Woollard. Micawber was treated with an insight that brought him very near to the hearts of the audience. The peroration of Micawber, in which he denunciated Uriah Heep, was well rendered by Dr. Woollard. Miss Sweeney contributed a couple of solos, which were well received.

YORK BRANCH

AT a meeting held in the Peckitt Street Lecture Room, on 15 November, Miss Kidson, of the Leeds Branch, read an admirable paper entitled "Doris in Dickens's Land: a Fantasy." It was in response to the feelings resulting from the knowledge of the child characters Dickens had portrayed in his books that she had conceived "Doris in Dickens's Land." In a racy and interesting manner Miss Kidson proceeded with her well-written sketch, which was listened to with great interest and attention.

On 22 November, at the same place, the Rev. E. L. Perry read a paper entitled "Charles Dickens: an Appreciation," which was a brief review of the life of the novelist. It was an excellent survey of Dickens's work and career, and was much appreciated by the audience.

On 6 December a miscellaneous programme was presented in place of the usual paper. In the unavoidable absence of the President (Mr. D. L. Pressly), Mr. W. Grimes presided over a fair attendance of members, and gave a short address. Among the items were the following: "Mr. Winkle and Miss Arabella Allen," by Miss Howard; address by the Rev. E. L. Perry; reading, "An incident in the life of Little Nell," by the Secretary. The programme was highly appreciated.

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH

BOOKS

History of the Pickwick Bicycle Club. Compiled by the "Hon. Mr. Crushton." Illustrated. London: The Pickwick Bicycle Club, 18 Eldon Street, E.C. 10s. 6d.

Tales from Dickens. By Hallie Erminie Rives. With Illustrations by R. B. Birch. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $1.25 post-paid.

Christmas in Dickensland: a Reverie. By J. W. T. Ley. *The Dickensian* Office. 3d.

NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES

"Literary Trivialities" (Drood Solution). *Glasgow News*, 16 November.

"The Mystery of Edwin Drood." Letter from E. J. S. *The Star*, 25 November.

"Dickens's Raven 'Grip.'" Letter from Lady Nottage. *Daily Telegraph*, 27 November.

"Dickens's Two Ravens: The Strange Story of 'Grip.'" A mystery solved. Illustrated. *Daily News*, 28 November.

"A Practical Reformer." (Dickens.) *Hull Eastern Morning News*, 28 November.

"Cigarette Papers" (Drood as a Play). By Joseph Hatton. *The People*, 19 November.

"A Talk about Pickwick and Dickens." Winnipeg: *Manitoba Free Press*, 11 November.

"Angla Kristnaska Mango. De Charles Dickens." Esperantigita de Martyn Westcott. *Tra la Mondo*, 15 November. Boulevard des Deux Gares, Meudon, France.

"Pickwickian Inns." By Charles G. Harper. Illustrated by author. *London Magazine*, December, 1905.

"Christmas with Irving, Thackeray, and Dickens." By Charlotte Harwood. Illustrated. "With Dickens at the Christmas Hearth": a poem. By Richard Burton. Illustrated. New York: *The Critic*, December, 1905.

"The Literary Correspondence of Edward Hovey concerning the Fate of Edwin Drood." Edinburgh: *The Scottish Review*, 30 November.

"A Chat about Christmas Reading." By W. T. H. *Ideas* Xmas Number.

"The Christmas of Dickens." *London Opinion*, 2 December.

"Natural History and Dickens." By George Locke. *Hastings and St. Leonards Advertiser*, 30 November.

"A Dickens Relic: Cheeryble House." *Manchester Evening News*, 11 December.

"Dickens's Grandfather Clock." *Hull Eastern Morning News*, 29 November.

"Famous Stories Epitomized": *A Tale of Two Cities*, *David Copperfield*, and *Pickwick Papers*. *Life*, 9 December.

"The Final Stave of *A Christmas Carol*" (With Profound Apologies to the Genius of Charles Dickens). Stave Five. *Punch*, 13 December.

"An Appreciation of Dickens." By G. M. Parkinson. *Great Thoughts*, 16 December.

"With Dickens Round Gadshill: a Chat about the Haunts of the 'Christmas Novelist.'" *Answers* Xmas Number.

"Charles Dickens and Christmas." By William Francis. *Bristol Observer*, 16 December.

"Do we Eat too much?" By the Fat Boy in *Pickwick*. "A Christmas Carol": a Digest of Dickens's Famous Story. "Best Wedding-Breakfast Speech," supposed to be delivered by Sam Weller. "Christmas in Dickens Land." *Tit-Bits*, 23 December.

"Edwin Drood: Dead or Alive." By J. Cuming Walters. *Westminster Gazette*, 23 December.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL
A TRANSLATION AND A NEW EDITION

WE suppose there are few languages into which Dickens's little masterpiece has not been translated. And it was only natural and to be expected that those who are responsible for the newest language should consider that their library cannot be complete without *A Christmas Carol* in Esperanto. Its full title is "Kristnaska Sonorado: Kristnaska Rakonto de la Glora Angla Autoro, Charles Dickens. Esperantigita de Martyn Westcott."* Those of us who know the *Carol* more or less by heart, and who are anxious to become conversant with Esperanto, will find this little book invaluable for the purpose and a means of combining pleasure with profit. For instance, the first paragraph in the book speaks for itself: "Marley estis seuviva. Neuia dubo pri tio. La protokolo pri lia enterigo estis subskribita de le pastro, la ekleziulo, la cerkforisto kaj la cef-ploregulo. Scrooge gin subskribis. Kaj la nomo Scrooge multe estis lakaota pri ia aju afero en la Borso."

We are assured by a critic who is more able to judge than we are, that the translation gives "not only the spirit, but also to an extent infinitely greater than before, the letter of one of the most touchingly human stories which ever aroused in the universal breast that fellow-feeling which makes us wondrous kind." Whatever the merits the translation has as such, the book will form another item of interest for the Dickens collector.

The new edition of the *Carol*† which the Library Press have sent us is printed in good type and is "embellished with eight plates from drawings by Charles Pears." We cannot say we admire the pictures with the red tint all over them. That of Scrooge and Bob Cratchit, both of whom must be at least seven feet high, facing page 114, is a shocking caricature.

* *Review of Reviews* Office, 1s. net. † The Library Press, 2s. net.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
"DEATH OF MR. PICKWICK"

DEAR SIR,—May I through the medium of *The Dickensian* inquire where I could obtain an article or paper entitled "The Death of Mr. Pickwick"? I believe it was written by Sir Walter Besant, and published many years ago in some magazine. It was very clever, and well worthy the attention of Dickens lovers. Yours faithfully, FOY SWINFEN-BARBER.

7 BREWSTER ROAD, LEYTON, ESSEX.

NATIONAL DICKENS LIBRARY

DEAR SIR,—As the appeal for funds to purchase the late Mr. Kitton's excellent collection has had but scanty response, may I be allowed to make a suggestion? It is, that the Portsmouth Corporation be approached to make up the deficiency, and that, subject to their agreeing to do so, the collection be lodged at Dickens's birthplace. From the first it struck me that this would be the best place for all Dickensian relics, and I can see no advantage in having part in London and part at the birthplace. Apart from our love for the great author, his birthplace has not the picturesque and historic interest of Shakespeare's, but the housing of this collection would be an incentive to visit it, and would not prove a loss to Portsmouth.

Yours faithfully, S. HINTON EDWARDS.

CHARLES DICKENS

AT THE AGE OF NINETEEN

From a drawing by Thomas Uwins, R.A.

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